

CHAPTER VI

THE FAMILY

In treating the families of Rowanduz, it is unnecessary to describe in detail those of the official class, for the officials and officers are of diverse ethnic origins, Arab, Kurd, and Turk, and they are often unmarried or unaccompanied by their wives. Even when settled temporarily in the town with a spouse, they represent only in part the larger social units to which they belong elsewhere in Iraq. Most of the officials and officers has yet made Rowanduz a permanent residence. It is thus possible, making reference to the officials whenever necessary, to direct attention to the Kurdish populace, aristocrats and commoners. It has been chosen to treat the family of a wealthy merchant as typical, and to draw comparisons with others from this central treatment.

It is important at the outset to define what is understood by the Kurdish "family." For the townspeople, the term most regularly used is mal, "house," (perhaps from Arabic, mal, "property"). The word is alternately used for the physical structure itself or for the group of kindred to be found in such a dwelling. Postmarital residence is normally patrilocal, the groom taking his bride to his father's house or to a new dwelling furnished

by himself or his paternal relatives. If, however, the children of two brothers who live under the same roof marry, the newly-wedded pair may remain at home. The people who might thus be expected to be found in the mal or "house" may include a man and his wife, his paternal grandparents, his paternal uncles and their wives, his unmarried paternal aunts, his parents, his brothers and their wives, his unmarried sisters, and the children of the males of this group, boys and unmarried girls. Strictly speaking, such a unit has little realization among the townspeople. There is a strong prejudice against unmarried adults, both male and female, and most girls leave their parental home for that of a husband soon after reaching maturity. When there is more than one son, it is commonplace for the younger, when he marries or soon afterward, to occupy a new establishment, provided either by his own labor or by a subsidy from his parents. For the lower classes, the size of the dwelling precludes too extensive a gathering. The household of Shakir Effendi is made up of Shakir Effendi, his wife, three sons, a daughter-in-law, a grandson, and a number of servants. Shakir Effendi's daughter is married and lives in the home of her husband. Ra'uf Effendi's son died in childhood, a victim of the "evil eye," and his mal thus contains only himself, his wife, his two unmarried daughters, and the servants. The aristocratic establishment of Muhammad 'Ali Aga of Jindan is much like these, save that one of the sons has already been provided with a separate domicile.

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his father's brother's daughter is held as an inalienable 582
rule, it can be seen that marriages must be arranged
between pairs of brothers and sisters who are cousins to
each other. Thus, one's father and father's brother are
married to his mother and mother's sister respectively,
and the mother's brothers and father's sisters make up
third and fourth couples. If two things are envisaged,
patrilocal residence and Islamic inheritance, it can be
appreciated in the first regard that both the paternal
and maternal aunts are parties to an individual's residence,
the first, the wife of the mother's brother, before she
is married, and the second, the wife of the father's brother,
after her wedding. Both paternal and maternal aunts are
described by the same kinship term, gila. On the other
hand, the paternal and maternal uncles are differentiated, 601
called guz and ghal respectively. The first lives under
the parental roof of the individual concerned, and the
latter carries this uncle's daughter. The maternal uncle,
as has been seen, rarely, if ever, lives in the same house
as his married sister, and in the system imagined here,
one cannot marry his daughter. As far as inheritance is
concerned, it has been noted that the property is divided,
each son receiving a share and each daughter a half-share.
If there are offspring, a son cannot claim any part of the
estate of his maternal uncles or aunts. If, however, he is
married to the daughter of a paternal uncle, his wife
receives a half-share of her father's property, just as his
sister, wed to the son of the paternal uncle, is given a

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representation of the "uneducated" urban women, as fully as it did that of the women in the villages, but was difficult to reconcile with the form of life of the fully and half-grown schoolgoing children. In fact a continual conflict existed between the original, normal type of life in the house, and the demand for fixed habits, fixed furnishing, necessary for the educated section of the family.

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As an example of a new home intended solely for an educated urban woman we can take one created by a young newly-married couple, both folk-school teachers. It was a miniature edition of my interpreter's house: hall or loggia, with a room for the reception of guests behind. Entrance to the bedroom was gained from the loggia, and thence to the staircase. In front of these rooms was a court with a cooking pit in the one corner and a pump in the center. By the street wall there was a latrine in the form of a locked room. The bathroom in the neighboring house could be used. There was no electric light. The guest room featured steel furniture, and the loggia matresses in all as were also intended for sleeping on on the roof. The bedroom was furnished with a English suite consisting of a double-bed, wardrobe and dressing table made of polished wood. When this educated couple's house was arranged at the time of marriage there was furniture in all rooms. If this house be compared with others where similar furniture had previously been found, it appeared that in the course of time, as the family increased, the Swedish mode of life resulted in the destruction of regular furnishing. This had apparently been the case at the house of my interpreter, where the original marriage bed had been moved up to the roof for the sleeping use of the various members of the family, while the wardrobe, filled with headlin, was left in solitary regency. When planning the wedding of the grown-up son in my interpreter's house, where the couple was to live in the house of the bridegroom's father as members of an extended family, it was decided that the room where the family wardrobe stood and which during the time I lived there had no other furniture, should be given to the young couple. The daughter-in-law would probably acquire a English bedroom suite as part of her bride wealth.

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In the young couple, after having been an independent family unit would, after the birth of the first child, divide the woman entering the woman's world of the house, the man the man's world outside the furnishings would be included in the entrance, Swedish, movable pattern.

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The only possible solution of the problem of housing so large a number of family members in a house with relatively so few rooms, is to use them in constant shift for meals and for sleeping. It



Fig. 11. 471, 472, 473, 474 and 475. Ground plan of house for newly married couple, Hansen, No. 1, 1961.

a. central living room, b. kitchen, c. sleeping room, d. guest room, e. cooking and eating facilities as described, f. bathroom, g. guest room.

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With one or two other young men simulations to assist the arrival of the bride at the family house which is future was also to be her's. Although these weddings were celebrated by parents, a representative of the bride's house, either Mulla or his son, took part in the leading of the bride. On the return to the village, the carriage we comprised a car containing the bride accompanied by two women: a female relative who went as to the mother-in-law, and the woman who later should assist in the bride's family with the bride's day and to evidence of the bride's virginity. At another wedding, which took place at Rakana to which we could not reach, the bride was carried the last stretch by a white mare accompanied by white oxen. That the horse was a mare was to promote child-bearing. On arrival at the house the bride and her companions were led in, their arrival being greeted by the female guests, whilst the men knelt on the clay roof of the house as on that of a neighbor, where carpets are spread out, with tea and honeyed, and the bride was in position. The two require that all invited to this meal lay around unless there is valid reason for not doing so. On the other hand the host—in this case the sister of the bridegroom—must ensure that the meal takes place as accordance with Islamic law¹². The meal is prepared by the women but served by men for other men. Men also attend to the women and serve tea¹³. The women sit behind the men by the men. The festivities for the two groups to place in order segregation. When the meal is over, the men's dance begins on a small, narrow platform between the houses. The wedding festivities were held for more than one day.

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The men's dance is a chain dance in which, standing side by side, they take each other's hands and at the same time place their feet, round that of the other man so that they stand shoulder to shoulder. The outside man of the line waves a stick in his raised left hand. The chain forms a circle, and the steps take place twice, to complete the circle and set again, whilst the men in the center slowly move sideways. To dance resembles the Yugoslav Kolo, danced in the Balkans, a movement also pointed out by them¹⁴. The same chain dance is reported from the Lushai in Iran¹⁵ and from the Baluch¹⁶. As to similarity to the Greek Symphonie is pointed out. However, both in Yugoslavia and in Iran I saw again during the dance in hold each other by the belt, whereas the Kurds held each other only by the hand.

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The accompanying music is played by a drummer and a clarinet, while a third person in the group of dancers maintains these many dancers in line by the gestures which he keeps in a stick stuck up under his mouth. The drum¹⁷ being on a small round the drummer's neck and was played with two drumsticks, of which two a thin, straight bone, the other a stick. The stick bent at the end. They were held on each side of the drum, and after use were stuck together. The clarinet¹⁸ had a fascinating tone, and when set to use was split into two pieces which were held one each other and played. (see appendix). These musicians arrived some days before the wedding was to take place and played¹⁹. One of the village is the small village in town, in the afternoon and evening when the men danced the chain dance for hours in the light of two lanterns, present lamps. The continuous rhythm of the dance was stimulating, and ended in Yugoslav one moving with astonishing swiftness than that by the child's one with no freedom in European music, of which the house possessed three or four. There was no interval between songs than in European music, without even being well beyond of one rather. There was no philosophy or

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562 In none of the three female environments as far considered was the idea of liberty understood in the same way as it is in the West.

569 In the female and last female environment, the environmental other within, the willing was obligatory. As opposed to their abstract desire the environmental other restricted action. Nothing in their daily activities brought them into contact with the man's world. Household purchases were attended to by the husband. I was also told that goods connected with dress were brought from home to home by women. However, women's material world was not confined to the home, for all women's apartments in the town were in contact with each other. A series of female visitors entered the home, the names of which frequently visited other homes. Under cover of respectable behavior there was considerable freedom within the urban woman's world. In consequence, restricted women in towns obtained an opportunity of contact that lay on a quite different social plane from that applying to the three other female spheres. Among female villages women the same possibility scarcely applied. There, however, it took place just as much in weaving and reeling phases, etc., than in the towns. In the environmental female sphere in Kurdistan, subjected to the will and restriction, a distinct barrier existed between the man's and woman's worlds, not only in towns but also in working towns.

591 For a man married to one or two wives in the environmental woman's sphere in a town like Sulaimani, one found other things described as typical of a Turkish house: "The air (strong) like home is the place where the wife and children are, and where he can be made and spend the night ... He will come to either the shop or his domestic wife, where he meets the people whose company constitutes his spiritual center ..."

572 In the environmental female environment in Sulaimani as represented by my informant's home, with its two wives whose sphere of work fell within the framework of the house, the actual place of work could, occasionally, be moved to the female zone of another home. When taking a large supply of bread, the dough for which was prepared by an outside woman who arrived at dawn, the two housewives later in the morning transferred the actual operation to the home of a neighbor. Even there was a mother, perhaps they were that could be used by several women simultaneously. This was more effective than the women here that had over the fire for coffee for daily work.

573 These and other rules confined the social contact with the outside world. In my experience the abstract women in the towns only made purchases in the city and then only of essential, even, of men and vegetables. As mentioned, the daily household purchases were made by the husband and delivered to small shops, of whom there were many, who in this way constituted networks that kept the women out of the town and vegetable markets. This was not considered in any form of oppression, or that my informant was positively the same as Khawandkari, who writes "... as a rule the women visit friends, relatives in the past and now are not even shopping ...". The two women do have gone, but lack of freedom for personal shopping was definitely not regarded as an infringement on their liberty but a deprivation.⁷⁰

581 In investigation as to which was beyond the boundaries family circle had access to the home of environmental other women declared that certain traders or artisans were admitted. A husband up